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ABSTRACT

A transcription is presented of a conference sponsored by Rio Salado Community College (RSCC) to provide information on the use of audio teleconferencing to offer live, interactive classes for the homebound. After an introductory statement on RSCC's Homebound Project, Jan Baltzer provides an overview of the SUNDIAL network, RSCC's audio teleconferencing system, and background on the Homebound Project. Next, Helen Sprawls notes the advantages that the program provides for homebound people and the agencies that serve them, and considers the recruitment and public awareness activities undertaken by RSCC. Jan Davie discusses the program advisement aspects of the Homebound Project, which focus on educational planning for credit and non-credit programs, the selection of goal-related courses, the evaluation of past college credits, and referrals to proper program coordinators. In addition, Davie explains the modifications made to accommodate special needs with respect to registration, equipment, textbooks, and testing. Next, Beverly Harker provides a brief overview of the Senior Adult Lifelong Education Programs offered through the Homebound Project. The next section offers accounts of program involvement by representatives of four agencies involved in serving the homebound, three faculty members, and four students. A summary of small group discussions on the potential impact of the program, desired courses, special client needs, and available resources, and a list of conference participants conclude the report. (HB)

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Río Salado Community College

presents

THE OUTSIDE LINE

A Conference on Equalizing Educational Opportunities for Homebound People Through Audio Teleconferencing

May 31, 1984

Phoenix College

JC 840 540

THE RESULTS CAN SPEAK FOR THEMSELVES

RIO SALADO COMMUNITY COLLEGE

presents

THE OUTSIDE LINE:

A Conference on Equalizing Educational Opportunities
for Homebound People Through Audio Teleconferencing

May 31, 1984

Phoenix College
1201 West Thomas Road
Phoenix, Arizona

For more information on Rio Salado Community College's

HOMEBOUND PROJECT

CALL 256-7722

To The Reader:

What you are about to read is something very unique. It is a transcription of THE OUTSIDE LINE - a conference on how people who are "homebound" are taking live, interactive classes through audio teleconferencing.

The conference was hosted by Rio Salado Community College and was held on May 31, 1984 at Phoenix College, Phoenix, Arizona - it was the first conference of its kind in the country!

As you can see from the list of participants, agencies representing many different "homebound" people came and spent the day with us to learn about Rio Salado Community College's Homebound Project, and how, through audio teleconferencing, "homebound" people - at home, in hospitals, in care centers - become part of live, interactive credit and continuing education classes, regardless of their disabilities.

Our audio teleconferencing system enabled four of our "homebound" students to attend the conference and be part of the panel "Perspectives on the Homebound Project".

Our students are our most enthusiastic supporters!

Doug: "I'm just glad it was there for me when I needed it."

Blossom: "Audio Teleconferencing has just opened up a whole new world for me. I'm going to do it again and again and again."

Ella: "It has been terrific for me. These courses take us out of ourselves and help us feel a part of something bigger."

Carolyn: "My disease is marked terminal. Life should have ended 3 years ago. I could give up, but instead I decided I'd reach out and dream a little with Rio Salado."

You will find what you read in these pages enjoyable, informative and, at times, very moving.

We at Rio Salado Community College are very proud of the success of the Homebound Project. It is a tremendous opportunity for us to serve "homebound" people.

Welcome to THE OUTSIDE LINE!

Helen Sprawls

Helen Sprawls, Coordinator
Homebound Project

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Welcome!

Myrna Harrison, President
Rio Salado Community College

I am delighted to have you here. It's a pleasure to see all of you and to see how many of you are interested in this new and exciting technology that makes it possible for us to serve the homebound student.

Rio Salado Community College is a non campus college. We are six years old, and we were set up to serve the under served student. Without a campus we are committed to going to students wherever they are. We have over 150 sites that we teach in throughout all of Maricopa County. We also offer courses via television, radio, audio cassette, video cassette, and this system that we're using today, the audio teleconferencing system.

When you have a beautiful campus, such as the one that we're in today at Phoenix College, you say "We have a wonderful campus, come visit us." When you're like Rio Salado Community College, without a campus, instead what we say is "Where are you? What do you need? Stay there, and we'll come get you." One of the ways we come and get students, one of the technologies that we are now using, is this audio teleconferencing system.

In the first year of operation, we have had a very small grant to do a feasibility study on working with homebound students. We found that it really was feasible and that there was a need in the community, so we then set up a small pilot project for this spring. The success of that project has absolutely overwhelmed us and delighted us.

In the first semester of the Homebound Project, we had 29 students enrolled and those represented 44 enrollments, which means that some students took more than one course. We are delighted to have been able to serve these students, to have established the Homebound Project, and to find ways to make it possible for those people who cannot attend classes in the regular on campus mode to attend them from their home.

We have a strong commitment to offering education to everyone who can profit by it. The Homebound Project has been one of our most exciting and most successful projects, and one of the ones that gives me the greatest personal pleasure. Today you'll hear a lot more about it. Please accept my very best wishes and know that you are very welcome at this conference hosted by Rio Salado Community College.

Overview of the SUNDIAL Network
and
Introduction to the Homebound Project

Jan Baltzer, Associate Dean
Instructional Technology and Design

Before I start the official part of the program, I'd like to refer you to your packets. There is an agenda in your packets, and you will see that this morning is really being devoted to giving you an overview of both the SUNDIAL Network and audio teleconferencing, as well as the Homebound Project.

We are very fortunate to have with us today not only the Rio Salado staff that has been involved in the Homebound Project, but also we have faculty members who are with us who have taught the homebound students, we have agency representatives who have worked with us in various capacities, and we are going to be able to have four of our homebound students talking to you a little bit later in the morning about their experiences.

This afternoon, once we have finished talking to you, we are going to let you talk to us. We will be dividing you up into discussion groups, those of you who can remain with us after lunch, and we will be talking about ways we can improve the project. We'd like to hear what we did right and what we did wrong, as well as hear your suggestions for the continuation of the Homebound Project which we think is a very vital part of the College.

I was asked today to talk to you about audio teleconferencing in general and to give you some background on the Homebound Project.

The use of the telephone for instruction is not new to the educational community. The telephone has been used for instruction in the higher education community since the early 1950's, so it's not a new concept at all. It is new to Arizona, and it is new to the west. Most audio teleconferencing systems are in the midwest at the land grant universities, where they've been used in extension programs to serve the remote areas of those very rural communities.

Today, it is my distinct privilege to talk with you about the SUNDIAL Network, Rio Salado Community College's audio teleconferencing system. The SUNDIAL Network was conceived three years ago by Rio Salado administrators and staff who believed we needed to expand our services to the rural or less populated areas of Maricopa County and to better serve our business and industry clients.

The gestation period for a teleconferencing network is a little longer than for a human. Although SUNDIAL was conceived three years ago, it wasn't really born until 1/83.

Today, in our second full year of operation, the SUNDIAL Network serves 38 different sites throughout the 9,226 sq. miles of Maricopa County and that number is increasing daily.

The Technical components of the SUNDIAL Network are highly sophisticated electronically, yet they are very simple to understand and to use. The major components of the Network, and of any audio teleconferencing system are: station equipment, the transmission system and the bridging or control center.

The station equipment used by students at established sites on the SUNDIAL Network is a Darome Convener. Students can hear their instructor and students at other sites over this small speaker which is plugged into a modular telephone jack, and they can interact with the instructor and other students by simply pressing down the black bar on the microphone base and speaking into the microphone. Conveners and a minimum of 4 microphones are placed on loan to a site for the length of the courses scheduled at that site.

You have Darome microphones in front of you today, and as you ask questions, or make comments during this morning's session, we will be asking you to use those microphones. You do so by simply pressing down the black bar and talking into the microphone. In this way, our homebound students who are listening in on line can participate in today's conference. Students in our Homebound Project, which I will talk more about later on, use a variety of different receiving equipment including headsets provided by the College.

The transmission system for the SUNDIAL Network is the regular telephone network which crisscrosses the county. Rio Salado selected this 2-wire system, rather than a 4-wire dedicated system for three major reasons. First, the 2-wire system uses POTS lines or 'Plain Old Telephone Service'. This means that the SUNDIAL Network can literally include any site in the county where telephone service is established. If you have a phone jack, we can serve you with audio teleconferencing and that's one of the things that enables us to serve homebound people so well.

This leads to the second advantage, which is flexibility of locations and station equipment. When the SUNDIAL Network began operation in January of 1983, Rio Salado had over 150 established instructional sites in the county. The 2-wire, dial-up system allows us to access as many of those sites, or as many additional sites as we like and as the need arises. This is a distinct advantage over the dedicated network which must operate from fixed locations.

Any type of station equipment, from regular telephone sets to fancy speaker units can be used with this system, giving us the flexibility to use existing phone equipment in addition to our Darome conveners.

The third reason we selected a 2-wire system is the low to moderate cost of the telephone lines. Because the Network Control Center is located in downtown Phoenix, and, therefore, in the center of the Phoenix Metropolitan area, we have very few sites in the county which are considered long distance. In addition, we have found that many of the sites in which we schedule classes have Phoenix telephone lines for business purposes, and many of them have generously allowed us to use these lines for SUNDIAL.

Each of the twenty white buttons on the Darome bridge represents a separate telephone line coming into the bridge. Using this "Meet-Me" Bridge we can conduct one course or meeting in 20 different sites, or we can conduct 2 courses simultaneously in 10 different sites each, or we can have 4 different activities occurring simultaneously on the Network with a maximum of 5 sites each. This break-down function can also be used to divide students into separate groups in which they can hold small group discussions or do problem-solving activities without disturbing each other.

The audio support system to the right of the bridge contains 5 audiocassette decks. One deck is used for the automatic answer function on the bridge so that when students call the bridge, the call is automatically answered with a looped message that the caller has reached the SUNDIAL Network and a bridge operator will be with them shortly.

The other 4 audiocassette decks can be used to record classes or activities, as well as to play preproduced material down-line to students. We do record all classes, and audiocassettes of the classes are made available free-of-charge to students who have missed class or who wish to review a class session.

As important as the equipment is to the SUNDIAL Network and the operation of audio teleconferencing within Rio Salado, the staff and the organization behind the equipment is much more important.

The SUNDIAL Network is part of the IT&D department which also provides credit and continuing education programs through a variety of instructional media including broadcast television, broadcast radio, cable TV, audiocassette, video cassette and correspondence. Beginning in a month, we will offer credit and continuing education courses on Sun Sounds which is our radio reading service for the print handicapped, so we will be adding radio subcarrier to the list of delivery systems we support. This means that there is a very highly trained professional staff of people who know how to train faculty, schedule courses and develop materials for all of our delivery systems. In addition, we have an audio teleconferencing technician who has major responsibility for all technical aspects of the system and local Program Aides or LPA's at each site who are hired on a temporary basis to make sure sites are open and equipment is properly connected for each class.

The most important operational part of the Network, however, are our faculty, our operations support staff, and, of course, our students.

Whether the faculty teach from our small audio booth, from our large teleconferencing studio, from home, from an airport - like our electronics instructor has done, or from a hotel room - as several instructors have done during trips to Chicago, New Orleans and elsewhere, the faculty are the keys that make the Network successful.

Faculty are hired in advance of the beginning of the semester and given training and experience in three esential areas:

First, faculty receive technical training so that they fully understand the mechanics of the Network and how it can successfully be used to enhance their courses. Our goal is to make faculty feel comfortable with the technology so they can concentrate on their subject matter and their students.

Secondly, our faculty receive assistance from our instructional design staff to determine the best way to adapt or modify their teaching materials for the audio-only medium or for audiographics such as slow-scan video or tele-writing.

Finally, faculty receive one-on-one training in the instructional techniques which have proved necessary for successful audio teleconferencing courses. Specifically, faculty are taught:

(1) humanizing techniques such as role call activities and master rosters with personal information about students;

(2) participation techniques such as question and answer periods and group discussion activities;

(3) modification of message style away from straight lecture and toward the use of guest speakers, group activities and panel discussions; and

(4) feedback mechanisms to allow students to constantly provide input on how the class was progressing and on how the Network is working. Most of the feedback mechanisms designed for SUNDIAL are similar to those already in place for Rio Salado's other alternative delivery courses.

The Course Operations area of the Instructional Technology and Design department provides telephone back up services for SUNDIAL faculty with a 24-hour student hotline, duplication services for faculty instructional materials, and mailing services to distribute materials to students and to receive assignments.

The Course Operations staff is backed up with sound operational procedures and organizational tools to insure that students and faculty alike are properly supported.

Now what about the students? The students are obviously the most important part! During the spring semester of 1983, our first with the SUNDIAL Network, we enrolled 136 students in 8 SUNDIAL classes. Of that 136, we had 115 students completing for a completion ratio of 85%. During the fall semester of 1983, we enrolled 232 students in 11 classes and had a completion ratio of 87%. This spring we are offering 18 classes and enrolled 360 students with a retention rate of approximately 90%. Our students gather in high school classrooms, industry conference rooms, media centers, and private homes. We have had as many as eleven students at one site and as few as one student at a site. We've had students participate from home because of transportation difficulties and physical handicaps, and from the hospital because of illness.

Student responses to the Network and the classes has been overwhelmingly positive. We have received such comments as:

"I'm having a lot more input than I do in a regular class."

"It's easier to understand because it seems like the teacher is just talking to one person at a time."

and

"I really have to prepare for this class because the instructor knows when I don't."

Once our first classes were up and running, we began to look for other, less traditional ways to use the SUNDIAL Network. What we developed were two unique programs: Project Tele-Advisement and Project Homebound.

Project Tele-Advisement was designed to use audio teleconferencing as the vehicle for delivering program advisement, counseling and student services to rural areas of the county as well as to business, industry and agency sites. The result of this pilot was the SUNDIAL College Information Network.

Using five of the lines on our Darome Meet-Me Bridge, we are currently providing live advisement sessions scheduled for students pursuing certificates and degrees at Rio Salado; an automated dial-acess tape with general college information available to students 24 hours/day, 7 days/week; and a manual dial access service with specific topic tapes available to students from 2:00-6:00 pm Monday through Friday.

We're now to what you came to hear about today - The Homebound Project.

As President Harrison told you, last fall we applied for and received a $1700 grant from our Maricopa Community College District Developmental Projects Fund to do a feasibility study for using audio teleconferencing to reach homebound students.

We looked around the country for models, and we found there weren't any. There were many secondary schools and colleges that were using a telephone to connect one homebound student with students in a classroom, but there wasn't anybody using audio teleconferencing to connect a group of homebound students with a group of non traditional distance learning students over a sizeable geographic area.

Our feasibility study showed us that there was a market. So in January, we applied for an additional $6800 from our District Development Funds to do a pilot study for the Homebound Project, and we hired Helen Sprawls as Project Coordinator.

Project Homebound was designed to use audio teleconferencing for reaching students who are unable or unlikely to attend traditional classroom courses. This spring semester we reserved 4 - 5 "slots" in 14 of our audio teleconferencing classes for this special group of people, and we scheduled 4 additional "homebound" courses that began in late February. We hired Helen Sprawls to recruit students, and to assist them in obtaining any special equipment or services they require to fully participate in the courses. This spring, we enrolled 29 homebound students, and we are confident this number will increase.

Right now, we are trying to develop processes for moving the Homebound Project into our departmental function as a whole. We will continue this project, but we are constantly looking for funding sources. One of the things we are going to talk about today is where do we go? How do we find the money to continue this very valuable and needed service.

This spring semester also saw the completed installation of our slow-scan video equipment which will give us 2-way video transmission of still pictures among our three military installations in the county and our central administrative facility in downtown Phoenix. We offered a mathematics class using this unique

audio graphics equipment. Our plans for the fall include installation and operation of five telewriter audio graphic units for use in such areas as accounting, electronics and math instruction.

In closing today, I'd like to reaffirm that the technical components which make-up the SUNDIAL Network are important to our success, but they are not nearly as important as the people involved - particularly our faculty and students. It is the interaction between them that makes the SUNDIAL Network really successful. It is the human element which demystifies the technology and allows instruction to take place.

We are very pleased to have the SUNDIAL Network at Rio Salado Community College because it is an effective tool for reaching distant sites and because it is another alternative delivery system, which allows us to better serve students in Maricopa County, and we are, once again, very happy that you are able to be here with us today.

The Homebound Project

Helen Sprawls, Homebound Project Coordinator

I've talked with all of you at least once, most of you several times, and some of you I've down right badgered into coming here today and made you feel that if you didn't come, you were really missing something. And I did that for a purpose. I really, absolutely believe I was right! I truly believe that by being here, you will realize the tremendous opportunity that we at Rio Salado Community College have for the people you serve.

I believe that absolutely and without qualification or exception, and I believe it for three very specific reasons:

First, the Homebound Project is a success! It is a going, functioning concern, serving the people you serve - your clients, your patients, and your friends.

My job as Coordinator centers on recruitment and public awareness. I started with two words "homebound project" in January, and by late February when our eight week classes began, we had 29 students and 44 enrollments.

There was no magic here, and there were problems. As first the idea seemed logical and simple. The technology, as you've seen, was there, and I knew through the initial needs assessment project done in the fall, when I first talked with many of you, that homebound people were there. So, all you do is bring the technology and the people together - simple.

Not so simple! You know the truth of that statement because it is your job to serve homebound people, people with special needs, and people out of the mainstream. Recruitment is still our biggest concern, and our biggest expenditure of time and effort.

We learned a lot. Some of our first letters were posted on bulletin boards for staff, thinking we were training home health people. Some of the press decided we were a kind of talk show for stay at homes. The word "teleconferencing" confused people. Many felt students would watch an instructor on television, and then call in with questions.

Many of you had real concerns that since we were a college, we were not for your clients because they would have to compete for grades or be part of a degree program, which, as you will learn today, is not the case at all.

But there were good things, too! We received help from several agencies who referred students to us, including our own Sun Sounds, and we received help from our homebound students as they came on board. They were our best recruiters, talking with other homebound people, with hospital staffs and with home health agencies.

It worked. The Homebound Project is an actuality. We enrolled 29 students and provided them with the necessary support services so that they could complete their courses. The Homebound Project is a success, and it is worth the investment of your time and effort.

Second, the Homebound Project is an important resource for the people you serve because it is for whoever you serve. Our homebound students represent a tremendous diversity of people.

During this pilot semester, our students were almost equally divided, men and women. There were 11 Senior Adults, 5 women and 6 men. We crossed minority lines. We crossed education lines, with our enrollment including 6 degreed people - retired lawyers, school teachers, in addition to students who had been homebound all their lives and had never attended any type of "classroom". We crossed age lines, with our students spanning the early 20's to the mid 80's.

Most importantly, we crossed impairment lines and met each student's needs on a one to one basis. This first pilot semester, we served homebound students with the following impairments: visually impaired (print handicapped to blind), muscular dystrophy, cystic fibrosis, cerebral palsy, stroke, epilepsy, multiple sclerosis, severe arthritis, diabetis, and degenerate hip conditions. Our homebound students included both people who were temporarily homebound (recovering from surgeries, etc.) and people who were permanently homebound. Our homebound students also included those who were terminally ill.

There was no common denominator among our students except the fact that they were homebound. Students enrolled in Criminal Law, Computer Concepts, History of Western Civilization, Beginning Spanish and Music Appreciation.

There were 15 homebound students who completed their courses, and we are going to honor them on June 5 at an audio teleconferencing reception entitled "Homebound Recognition Day". We are extremely proud of these students. They prove that being a homebound student is possible for the people you serve.

Third, your presence here is so important because now you can personally experience the audio teleconferencing system.

One of the most important parts of learning is being with other people. The College offers other alternatives to learning for homebound people, as Jan Baltzer has already described - broadcast television, broadcast radio, cable TV, audiocassette, video cassette and subcarrier radio. But these classes are not interactive. With audio teleconferencing, students talk with other students and with their instructor. As our homebound students will tell you:

"I feel getting to be involved and meeting such great new friends was the greatest reward anyone could receive."

"Do you know what it's like to sit in a room all day and watch four walls? Audio teleconferencing is the best thing that ever happened to me."

and

"It's a wonderful way for a homebound person to be with people. If you're lying in bed, you might as well learn something."

What about the future? Where do you fit in? The College is committed to continuing the homebound program - that's why you're here. We need you!

The continued success of the homebound program depends on you, on your involvement and support.

You are the key to homebound people. You are the initial motivator, the person that says "Yes you can. Give it a try." In the initial recruitment, you are my lifeline to the potential homebound student. We depend on your enthusiasm and your belief in us.

You can have a great influence on the direction of the Homebound Project. The people you serve should have the opportunity of becoming homebound students. It will enrich their lives and they will feel better! They should know that people like themselves have succeeded as homebound students, and that they have found it a fantastic experience.

Our success requires you. I'm here today because I believe this is a tremendous opportunity for homebound people, and that <u>together we can achieve something very special</u>!

Student Services

Jan Davie, Program Advisor

The natural progression for the homebound student, after being recruited, is program advisement.

As the program advisor for the Homebound Project, it was my responsibility to assist students with the following activities:

1. Educational Planning for Credit and Non-Credit Programs - Homebound students can earn (1) associate of arts, (2) associate of general studies, and (3) associate of applied science degrees as well as 30 certificates of completion in areas such as word processing, small business management and secretarial science.

2. Selection of Proper Classes Which Will Lead to Student's Educational Goal

3. Evaluation of Past College Credits

4. Referrals to Proper Program Coordinators such as Veteran's Affairs, Financial Aid and the Honor's Program

In working with the homebound students it became apparent that they needed more than academic advisement. They needed a mini support system to help them learn to manage the daily mechanics of school, and, most importantly, to give them encouragement when their spirits began to falter.

As the majority of you already know, homebound people lead very restricted lives and the thought of something as simple as registering for a class can be a very frightening experience. Therefore, our first task was to remove this hurdle by streamlining the traditional college system:

1. Registration is by Phone

   All homebound students are directed to one office, and they talk to only one person. They have to remember only one phone number - 256-7722, extension 204. Thus, they do not have to explain themselves over and over again to many different people.

2. Special Needs are Accommodated

   Headsets are available to all homebound students from the College for a $25 refundable deposit. These headsets are light weight and easy to use, and they are perfect for students who cannot hold a telephone receiver or who need to lie down while taking class. These headsets are mailed directly to the student and can be returned by mail.

3. Textbooks

   Textbooks can be ordered by phone and mailed directly to the homebound student from the Rio Salado Bookstore which is located on the Phoenix College campus.

For visually impaired students and students with disabilities which prevent them from using a standard textbook, textbooks are recorded. We make certain that students register with Recordings for the Blind, and the books are then shipped directly to the student's home from headquarters in Princetown, New Jersey.

4. Test Proctoring

If the nature of the disability is such that the student cannot do written work, the student will receive oral exams directly over the teleconferencing system and/or the exam is recorded on audio cassette, the student's responses to the exam are recorded on the back of the same cassette, and the cassette is mailed to the instructor.

Volunteers are assigned to students' homes for test proctoring. Parents, neighbors and friends (over 18 years old) may qualify as proctors.

There is no extra charge for being a homebound student. All credit classes are $14 a credit hour, and all non-credit classes are a set fee, ranging from $8-$30.

The future for the Homebound Project looks very exciting in terms of program advisement. Homebound students can be awarded scholarships and utilize other forms of financial aid such as grants, student loans and veterans benefits- all teleconferencing classes are considered seated- classes by the Veteran's Administration. Homebound students can be part of the Honor's Program and participate in the Honors Forum which is a special lecture series.

In addition to being able to graduate with degrees or certificates, homebound students can become tutors, through the teleconferencing system, to other students.

Being the program advisor for the Homebound Project has been very rewarding to me, both professionally and personally. The students were a delight to work with, and they always made me feel very special.

Senior Adult Programs

Beverly Harker, Director
of Non-Credit/Continuing Education Programs

Senior Adult programming has been a part of the Continuing Education Program at Rio Salado Community College for several years.

The programs for Senior Adults who can "come to college" serve the Sun City area, Mesa and Central areas of the valley. Many of our Senior Adult students have progressed from non-credit classes to community college degrees and university degrees - as they catch the excitement of learning!

Senior Adults have delved into new careers and new interests because of the opportunities offered by the community college. As you have already learned, Rio Salado Community College is a "college without walls" - a college that tries to meet the educational needs of people "where they are". In the "new" era of technology, we have found that audio teleconferencing can meet Senior Adult educational needs in nursing homes, retirement centers, senior centers, and now in the home.

Technically seniors who cannot leave their home, in this case, the seniors who do not or are not able to leave their nursing home or private home, are considered homebound.

In the fall of 1983 Rio Salado began the "S.A.L.E." (Senior Adult Lifelong Education) by offering two Senior Adult programs via audio teleconferencing - Memory Retention and Assertive Communication. The response was overwhelming. Thirty-two people enrolled in the first class and 17 in the second class. The students adapted very rapidly to the technology - we almost needed one microphone for each student because they didn't want to share them - they were so involved in the class!

There were 24 women and 8 men enrolled in the classes. Four were blind and all were over 70 years of age. Many were arthritic and had other visual handicaps. Two television stations covered the classes, and because the students watched the coverage, they were able to see "Sam" who taught the memory course. These two television spots are available for you to see at the breaks and at lunch time as well. The students speak for themselves.

Mary Jones, who is with us today, is the Activity Director at Kivel Geriatric Center, and can talk with you about the results of the first experience with bringing such classes to Senior Adults via audio teleconferencing. She, along with Pearl Heyman, was instrumental in taking a chance on the unknown classroom on the air.

In your packets is the flyer on summer programming. Toni Hungerford from Bell's Lodge is here today, and Bell's Lodge will be another Nursing Center Site. We are hoping that you will join us and become part of Senior Adult programming through audio teleconferencing.

One of our most faithful lifetime learners who suffered a stroke this spring and is now living with her niece and nephew will become another Senior Homebound Student this summer and fall.

We think we are reaching people who need educational stimulation - a tool to add to physical and recreational activities which are provided in abundance.

Perspectives on the Homebound Project

Beverly Harker - Moderator

Agencies: DR. FRANK KELLS, Assistant Manager, State Services for the Blind
MINNIE CONTRERAS, Good Samaritan Medical Center, Vocational Rehabilitation
DEDE PEARSE, Station Director, Sun Sounds
MARY JONES, Activities Director, Kivel Geriatric Center

Faculty: DON WICKLIFFE. Appreciation & Literature of Music
DAVID COST, Computer Concepts
PAULINE TODARO, Beginning Spanish

Students: DOUG
BLOSSOM
ELLA
CAROLYN

Agencies:

Dr. Frank Kells, Assistant Manager
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I'm with the State of Arizona Department of Economic Security, one of the small boxes on the organizational chart called Services for the Blind.

I have some handouts for those who don't know our agency and would like to. There are also copies of the booklet "Let Me Show You How" which I think might become the raw material for a course that would help us to reach blind persons all over the county and all over the state to whom we would like to provide instruction but cannot at this point because of the physical distance or time barriers to get to people and get to them frequently enough. I think we might be able to set up something there, through audio teleconferencing, as one of our future directions. The other handout is our annual report from last June 30th. We would like to share that with you. It does tell a great deal about our agency and how we spent $6,900,000 of your money last year.

Our experience with the SUNDIAL Network is mainly confined to a course last winter from November through January entitled "Computer Concepts". What is important today is giving you back information which I elicited from our staff and our people who participated in the course to share with you today as their representative because some of this I did not experience first hand.

But I did have a very unique chance to hear the course through a wall! One of the sites for the course was in the office next to mine, and it was interesting to try and hear what was going on. When it got interesting, I would approach the wall and try to hear a little better!

About 25 people enrolled in the course, and about 17 or 18 completed it. The bulk of these people were in a group that I would like to present as a subpopulation of the people who need this kind of thing, <u>the print handicapped</u>.

The print handicapped includes people who are totally blind and people who are just what I call "hard of seeing", who probably cannot handle print materials very well. Then we also have people who are print handicapped for various reasons and who are legally eligible for all the services that are designed for the print handicapped, and those are people who lack endurance, who cannot hold a book more than 3 or 4 minutes for reasons of arthritis, people who cannot hold a book still or hold their heads still long enough to make print material accessible to them. All those people are in the group called print handicapped, and those are the people who have a very special use and will have more so in the future for the services we are hearing about today, audio teleconferencing and the Homebound Project.

We had 4 sites for the Computer Concepts course, in addition to several people who were homebound and took this course from their home. One of the sites was the main branch of the Phoenix Public Library, and that, of course, is becoming a technological center for the print handicapped. People who are otherwise traditionally deprived of library services are accessing them very well there, and the fact that one of Rio Salado's sites for audio teleconferencing was there got people interested in the library's technology and things began to work together. Another site was at the Center for the Blind, which was convenient because a lot of people were familiar with it and knew how to get there. A third site was in the office next to mine, as I've said, in Services for the Blind on west Camelback, and the fourth was right here at Phoenix College.

The feedback that I got in surveying several students to prepare for today was just overall very, very positive. Lots of good comments on what it meant, not only to get the course, but what the course implied about other subject matter that was possible through the audio teleconferencing system.

Just to give you an idea very quickly of the population we're talking about - we're just now in the process of doing a statewide needs assessment which will be completed this year (it's been under way for 2 years), and we're beginning to get data which give us the basis for a little better estimate of what populations we're talking about.

We are now estimating that there are 6900 legally blind persons in Arizona and that would be people who have 10% or less of normal sight. That's a considerably severe loss of sight and this does not include most of the print handicapped. Print handicapped people we are estimating at 30 to 50,000 people. That gives you an idea of the population we represent in terms of needs that have to find a way of getting at the printed word and visual material in general.

The suggestion that came from our people as to improvements that Rio Salado could make in such courses were (1) students need more time to get recordings, and I'm sure Rio Salado knew that already. There's a tremendous problem of lead time to get access to the facilities that record things for people; (2) students would prefer a smaller class size, say 12 or 15 people; (3) what can we do about people who are on line that have barking dogs or crying babies? That's probably a familiar comment. When you go right into the home, I imagine you take the home as it is, and what you hear is what you've got!

There are two comments that I have from my own personal viewpoint.

First, I was going to ask for semantic and image reasons that Rio Salado take a look at that word "homebound" because a lot of the people I work with would really cringe if they were characterized as homebound. They'll buy a little bit of the term "transportation handicapped", but they don't consider themselves homebound. I see now, however, that you're already talking about being at home as only one small part of your population.

My second point is that there is a great advantage for people who are print handicapped to be in a class which is not visual. Basically, as it takes place, everybody's in the same boat and that does help a lot. We at Services for the Blind work very, very hard to get people to take their chances in the mainstream of society. There is no way to live a segregated life in a non visual world. You just jump in and swim with everybody else, <u>but</u> it's hard not easy. You need

good alternative skills, and probably some adapted materials and methods, when you go into an ordinary college classroom where everybody else is watching the visual aids, everybody else is seeing the body language and all the things that go on.

The Homebound Project through audio teleconferencing represents a great equalizer, and it does help. On the other hand, we would add a word of caution. Anybody who is striving and struggling toward independence and mainstreaming in life should not miss the opportunity to go out into the world if that's right for them.

In other words, it may be a hassle to get to the college campus, but maybe that's part of the mobility plan for that person to get back into the whole world, and we wouldn't want them to miss that opportunity by settling for something so convenient as to just sit down in your pyjamas and take the course at home. It's like putting the sand in the oyster to get the pearl. That's the way mobility often takes place. You give people itchy situations that they have to get out of in order to give them the motivation to become mobile. So we don't ever want to spoil that or miss that opportunity because of this wonderful, convenient way to take a course. I say we work individually with people on that.

I thank you very much for the opportunity of being with you. It's always a joy to work with Rio people. I was telling Joyce Elsner (Dean of Alternative Education) a moment ago, I really do feel that I catch the electricity of your enthusiasm every time I get in your groups. Thanks very much for inviting me.

Minnie Contreras
Vocational Rehabilitation Counselor
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I am representing one of the agencies that referred a client as a student. Helen Sprawls asked me to speak today on the referral process and how things went for us.

I had spoken with Helen initially when she was doing the needs assessment project, and we had talked about the kinds of needs that I would have as a counselor. Working at Good Samaritan Hospital I am exposed to a lot of people with chronic disabilities, people who are homebound, many times. Speaking of the word "homebound" as being a problem, as Frank Kells mentioned, it is not a problem for me. I know exactly what it means to me and to my clients, and I have many clients who are homebound, not only because of disabilities but because of transportation problems. So, working with Helen, I was aware that classes for homebound people were planned for Spring '84.

The client that I had was a young man that has a severe neurological disease, and he was totally disabled, in a wheelchair, and his disability made him extremely weak, so weak that he couldn't even push a wheelchair enough to go to school. He, however, thought at first that he could make it to a community college campus and reinstate himself. I did not think he could make it on a campus in the months after he got out of rehabilitation, and so our last resort was to look at the homebound classes.

The Homebound Project worked out beautifully for my client. I got in touch with Helen, who then got in touch with my client, and they made all the arrangements strictly on the phone which was great, not only for my client, but also for his mother. They live out in the Glendale area, and it would have been very difficult for her to take care of all the transportation plans to get him registered through a traditional system, so everything worked out really well.

I had a lot of questions when I first decided to recommend the Homebound Project to my client, which I discussed with Helen. Some of the things I was concerned about was that the phone line would tie up the family phone for 1 - 1 1/2 hours, whatever the class duration. I was concerned about incoming calls, would there be an increase in the phone bill, and how would my client hold the phone for the length of the class since he was so weak. These things of course were ironed out. The phone bill was not increased. Yes, the phone line is tied up for the class time, but this did not become a problem for his family. As we have seen, students can use the headset that my client used, so holding the phone was not a problem. I had another client who was very interested, but his family was not as cooperative in letting him have the phone time.

My client did take 4 classes. He was extremely pleased with the Homebound Project and so was his family. His mother was allowed to proctor his tests, and they were mailed in. Books were provided through the mail. In his case we did everything sort of at the last minute, so his mother did go pick up his textbooks.

There were no problems during the whole semester, and my client completed his courses with good grades. I think at first he was a little self conscious and a little hesitant about participating in class because he'd never done this before. But once he got going, he really enjoyed it. His mother also informed me that she was told she could also participate in his classes, and she was very pleased that this opportunity existed.

I as an agency representative enjoyed this because I did not have to go to any extra trouble to get my client enrolled. I didn't have to call the registrar's office, and I didn't have to turn out a lot of paper work at the last minute. All I had to do was talk to Helen Sprawls, and she took it from there. It was very easy for me. I didn't have to do anything except set out my original paper work, and that was it. The only snag we ran into was a confusion about where the textbooks were to be purchased, but that was quickly cleared up.

We never really experienced any difficulties in getting my client involved in this project. He did well, he enjoyed it, he made good grades, and he took 12 credit hours, which was more than I thought that he could handle.

He is very pleased. His disease process is improving a little bit, and he is getting more strength. He now is at the point where I'm not sure whether he will be taking homebound classes in the fall or whether he will be able to continue his education on campus.

Dede Pearse, Station Director
Sun Sounds
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Sun Sounds is an outreach project of Rio Salado Community College. We are a radio station that reads print material to the blind and the print handicapped.

Finally, our hopes are going to come to fruition in a project that I've tried to get going for a long time. We are going to start having classes for credit and non-credit over the radio station, adding radio reading service to the list of alternative delivery systems offered by Rio Salado. Sun Sounds reaches about 4,000 people in Arizona at present, and we expect to be in Tucson very soon. Our listeners come from all over the state. Sun Sounds is reached through KMCR, which is our main channel and also part of Rio Salado, and KMCR is also very excited about broadcasting classes.

We talk through our newsletters which are in Braille, large print and cassette. Information was mailed to all Sun Sounds subscribers about the Homebound Project, and many of them did take courses through audio teleconferencing this spring.

In July, our newsletters will list the courses to be offered through Sun Sounds. Non-credit courses include Computer Concepts and Novel Writing, and there will also be course advisement and basic study skills. In September we start credit courses, and Modern Fiction will be our first one. We're on a good schedule. We will be broadcasting our courses on Monday and Thursday nights from 8-9:30 pm.

We completely revise our schedule every 6 months, and adding this experimental classroom, which we have titled "Rio Classroom", is a big innovation for us. We will be running these courses for the next 6 months to a year as a pilot project.

A number of our listeners have asked for this kind of "classroom". In our survey last fall, we found there were 28% of our listeners that we considered "homebound", but there were also many others who could not use transportation. We feel very fortunate to be able to reach these people.

We are in 9 hospitals in the valley. We're also in 33 nursing homes. Receivers are in individual rooms, but, in addition, the activities directors in 13 of the care centers in the valley use our service in group sessions to provide mental stimulation and entertainment for their patients. We're hoping that a number of these nursing homes will be using "Rio Classroom".

I can't give you any feedback yet because we are just beginning to experiment with this type of programming, but we are very excited about the possibilities.

Mary Jones, Activities Director
Phoenix Jewish Community - Kivel Geriatric Center
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When Beverly Harker came to us last fall and presented the idea of teleconferencing, I must admit that we were very skeptical. We thought our seniors who were so accustomed to having a real live person in front of them as an instructor, especially Bev Harker, whom they love dearly, would not like using the technology. We thought that it would fail if they were to speak into a microphone and hear from a box.

But Bev brought out the point that our seniors are from the radio generation and that they are accustomed to listening to programs for hours - they have excellent listening skills! And sure enough, we began the program last fall, and it was a huge success. The video in the back of the room today shows the news coverage of that particular class on Memory Retention.

The average age of our residents is about 81 years old. They are alert and aware, but not as mobile as they would like to be, and, therefore, are what we might call homebound. They live in an institution, but it is independent living in which they prepare their own meals, except for one meal a day which is prepared for them. Transportation is a real problem. Some of them are visually impaired, amongst other problems. So audio teleconferencing was just ideal. Our residents did not experience any problems hearing over the system. The amplification was adequate and the pitch was low enough.

We were also fortunate that we were funded some money to pay for the first classes. As Bev mentioned, it costs nothing in a facility to bring the program in, but then, of course, the residents have to pay their class fees. This was a non-credit class, and because we had funding for this particular program, we had a large turn out of 30 people. They just enjoyed it immensely.

Some of the results I saw from the program were that the residents enhanced their socialization skills, it was mentally stimulating, it aided in the need to be a part of the outside community, it gave them self worth and immediate gratification, and it built confidence. It also allowed residents to feel the satisfaction of accomplishing a specific goal. We saw audio teleconferencing as such a positive factor, and we hope to continue with it.

We have a program planned for this summer, and the fee is $10 per person. But for the elderly homebound on fixed incomes, $10 can be a lot of money, and I would suggest that the facilities involved do some type of fund raising. I believe that as we let the community know about the program and that funds are needed, we will begin to see them coming in.

FACULTY:

Don Wickliffe, Appreciation & Literature of Music

Carolyn (one of the homebound students) had an incident with Murphy's Law and found herself in intensive care during the week of exams. She very kindly consented to record her final and send it to me at home. I was able to record on the back of it and send it back to her. It worked out very well, and she did a marvelous job as usual.

This has been a remarkable experience for me. I have a good deal of experience in teaching humanities on various levels and in various situations. I was asked last summer to build a course as a kind of pilot for the SUNDIAL Network in music history and appreciation. I had to decide on a text, record the tapes, write the syllabus and so forth. At the time I built it, I had visualizations of anywhere from 5-10 people in one location and 5-10 people in another location all hovered around a receiver, myself conducting more or less a classroom situation.

I didn't learn until shortly before the course that I was going to talk to people individually, from their homes, rather than groups and also that most of them were a very nontraditional type of student. Some of them could not see. They can't read my writing. They can't read ordinary type. Things suitable for the blind have to be used. I am constantly used to using visual analogies along with the audio, so much for that! Some of my students could not write. Okay, now I cannot mail out some sort of lovely manuscript and ask them to respond in writing, then I make suitable corrections and send it back. What am I going to do! This is a course for credit. I am obligated to cover the material and administer a grade, and I'm not in the habit of giving out grades for nothing.

Various things were suggested and people were most helpful. Going into a strange school is not a new experience for me. Coping with new administrations is not a new experience for me, and I use the term coping advisedly. In this case I found, rather to my astonishment I must admit, not only a great deal of cooperation and help, but an outright friendliness in manner and feeling of "we are all in this boat, let us all bale and help!" - from all the people with whom I had contact, starting with Jan Baltzer (Associate Dean of IT&D), Janet Whitaker (Director, Credit Programming) with whom I was in constant contact, Carol Cavanaugh (Course Operations) also, and Virginia (Administrative Aide). This was most gratifying.

And, of course, the day I arrived, Jan Davie provided me with enough inside information about my students, that finally the course began to take shape. All in all it required a considerable amount of adjustment on my part, and this was helped immensely by the entire staff. I, of course, would have dropped dead at the first session if it hadn't been for Mark Butler (Technician), an enormously gifted person.

When it comes right down to the line, this is all the sound and the fury without the students. In this case the students were not only a blessing, but they also really opened my eyes to a lot of needs and a lot of things that could perhaps be done. One of the major problems the students mentioned was in their being reached. Some of them only learned about this course by accident. Others talked about how difficult it was to get up enough confidence to decide that they could take something like this and compete. These are questions that we all need to direct ourselves to.

One thing I personally felt as an instructor was the students appreciation of their break in isolation, and yet, at the same time, I felt the pressure of continuing with the course materials and finishing the structure of the course, which we did and that sometimes doesn't happen in a regular classroom!

All in all, I'm grateful for this opportunity, and I'm glad to be with you today to speak about this extraordinarily worthwhile project.

David Cost, Computer Concepts

I did want to make a comment as Don Wickliffe was talking about wanting to see his students, to "see the whites of their eyes" so to speak, that I find I'm more informed about my students in this particular program than I have ever been in any of my other classroom situations. I think audio teleconferencing is more of an advantage than a disadvantage in understanding and knowing students.

I also want to comment, as many people have mentioned, on some of the things the staff have done. They have done a remarkable job in providing all the resources, whatever they had at their disposal, in helping the faculty to put a class together. It is difficult to walk from a classroom environment to "now you're teaching over the phone, and now you're working with people who are completely different than any you have come across in a classroom environment." It really makes it very unique.

In adapting materials to the students, it wasn't only the staff here at Rio that did a superb job, but a lot of the agencies that are here today, and other agencies that were not able to be here, have also been a great help in supporting faculty. For example, we had the situation of books for visually impaired students. What do we do? Recordings for the Blind promptly - I can't believe the speed, usually with non profit or government or grant organizations it seems that it always takes forever to get something done, they never have money and so forth - but I can't believe the speed with which material was turned around. Now I assume there is more advanced notice, but when we were on the spot and needed materials recorded, that material was recorded - not only the books, but outlines and course materials.

In addition, we had the situation where materials could not be in the normal type which Rio Salado provides, but had to be in large type, and the Phoenix Library typed the course outlines and other materials in large type for our students. I also found that the Phoenix Library has computers, and in teaching Computer Concepts it's very worthwhile for students to be able to take a look or feel and associate with what a computer is all about. Here was an opportunity for students to go to this location, one that most of them were familiar with and could get to, and receive some kind of instruction on how to use those computers and take advantage of them. Many of you may be thinking, how can they use a computer when they're visually impaired? The students use synthesizers that equalize the situation, so that they can use the technology as well as learn about it!

We had recordings, we had large type, but I also had diagrams that I was used to working with and relating to. How to convert these to use with visually impaired or blind people. There I have to say that not only did we turn to agencies, but the students themselves pitched in and helped. I had a student who took a great deal of material and a great deal of time and translated my diagrams into braille, and Rio Salado was able to duplicate that material.

I hope that the agencies here today will keep in mind that these kinds of resources are necessary to make the Homebound Project a success. With all of us working together, we can accomplish tremendous things.

Pauline Todaro, Beginning Spanish

Thank you very much. I feel like the caboose here that's bringing along the students!

I teach Spanish and French for Rio Salado, and I have been with audio teleconferencing since its inception 2 years ago. When I was offered the opportunity to teach Spanish to homebound students, I was very excited.

I thought I was going to have to do something different with the students who couldn't attend site classes. Boy did it bowl me over because I didn't have to change anything - nothing at all! If anything, I had to put on my track shoes to keep up with them. They are so eager to learn. They are beautiful people, and I want to say "hi" to Doug today over the system.

Everything has been said. Every time I heard something, I said to myself "I was going to say that!" I do want to say that I know this operation is the most fantastic thing that has come down the pike in a long time. I wish I would have had it a few years ago. Shirley Yount is there a microphone near you? Shirley Yount is the Homebound Coordinator for the Scottsdale Schools, and five years ago, she called me and asked me if I was interested in teaching homebound. Maybe I had 3 or 4 students at one time, and I had to run from place to place. I remember jumping in a car and wondering "What's that address again?"

I think the Homebound Project is great, and I'm sure it will continue to grow, throughout the Valley and throughout the country. I really am glad to have a been pioneer.

HOMEBOUND STUDENTS:

Doug:

About this time last year I came down with a disease that left me pretty much homebound. I was unable to do much of anything, and I was worried about continuing my education. Minnie Contreras at Good Samaritan told me about the Homebound Project, and I decided to try it out.

I took 2 audio teleconferencing courses and 2 television courses. I enjoyed the audio teleconferencing courses a lot more, mostly because I had someone to talk to. It wasn't hard for me to be on the phone for 1 or 2 hours. I didn't get bored or restless at all.

What I expected was watered down courses, simple and easy for people who are stuck at home. I found them to be quite the opposite. The courses were very interesting and very challenging for me.

The support services for the Homebound Project were just perfect. I never had to leave the house or wait for materials or anything like that. The teachers were very easy to get along with and very clear and concise about my homework.

It was a good experience for me and a wonderful opportunity. I can't think of anything I would like to change about it. I'm just glad it was there for me when I need it.

Blossom:

I tried to get to some college, some place to learn, and there was no transportation. I felt really trapped. I thought "I've got to get out of here. I've got to do something or learn something because I can't do anything physical." I had this on my mind for a long time, and I was pretty depressed about it. I got a letter from Sun Sounds, and I thought, "This can't be true," it was so marvelous!

I called and enrolled in 2 classes, Criminal Law and Appreciation & Literature of Music, and I loved it so. I really can't describe what it felt like to be part of the outside world. The Homebound Project brought the world to my house. I couldn't get to them, so they came to me.

I can't wait for the fall. It's something I'm looking forward to very much. I loved the teachers. They were so good, and I learned so much. I appreciate music more than I ever did. Criminal Law allows me to read the paper now and see new things that I never noticed before. Audio teleconferencing has just opened up a whole new world for me. Thank you all, very much. I'm going to do it again and again and again.

Ella:

When I was asked to talk to the group about audio teleconferencing and what it has done for me, I said I would be very happy to because I'm extremely enthusiastic about it. My only difficulty would be to stop talking about it because I feel it is such a terrific program. I'm in favor of it 100% and then some!

One of the reasons I'm so much in favor of the program is that my handicap is visual and has come upon me rather suddenly during this past year. For a person who has always had a book or two in the reading, it has been very traumatic to find that I will probably never be able to read a regular print book again.

However, we find answers to problems if we look hard enough. I feel that the Homebound Project has been one of the answers for me. It hasn't saved my life, but it has perhaps helped to save my sanity. It definitely has helped my sense of perspective.

Through one of the newsletters from the Talking Books Program, I found out about the audio teleconferencing courses for the homebound that were going to be given by Rio Salado Community College. There was a telephone number in the newsletter which I called, and that was my first contact with Jan Davie (Program Advisor). Let me say right now that Jan is a true treasure, she really is. She has been my contact throughout this semester. There's nobody who could have done more for anyone. She told me about some of the courses that were going to be offered in the fall semester, and she sent me information about them. I was amazed at the wide variety.

The course I chose was Appreciation and Literature of Music. I don't know what I expected, but when I was in it, I was very happy with the course. Our instructor, Don Wickliffe is very knowledgeable and very professional. The way he teaches in a low key, easy style brings us all in and makes us feel comfortable in the class. It has been terrific for me.

I have found friendliness and interest in every member of the Rio Salado staff that I have spoken with. I cannot say enough about what this audio teleconferencing course has done for me. I am now trying to teach myself to play the recorder, and I probably never would have done so if it wasn't for this particular course.

The positive kind of experience the Homebound Project offers is the best kind of therapy that can be offered to people who are physically handicapped. The fact that we are physically handicapped does not mean that we are mentally handicapped. We just need a stimulus to get us going. These courses give us something else to think about besides ourselves. They take us out of ourselves and help us to realize that we're a part of something bigger. The Homebound Project helps to build confidence, and it shows us that we can function to some degree in the mainstream of life.

Carolyn:

As Don Wickliffe said I had to go into intensive care, and as you know, there are no telephones in there. My husband had to call in and let Rio Salado know. There was no problem I just followed through later. The instructors and students work very well together.

At another point in class, I had breathing problems (I'm on oxygen), and I lost my voice. I managed to let Mark Butler (Technician) know I was on the line and that I wasn't talking. I was in the class the entire time and heard everything that was going on. I definitely couldn't ask any questions, but I could call Don afterwards if I needed help - so there's ways to get around everything.

I'd like to say that if I was there with you, I would take a bow because I now have 4 credits. I know that to all of you that doesn't sound like much, but to me that's almost a degree. I told my husband that when I got the first credit and I got an A, I thought I should go dancing. Instead I got a Baskin Robbins one dipper! When I found out I got any A in my last course, I thought I should really do something - maybe wheelies in my wheelchair! But I got a Baskin Robbins two dipper!

I didn't get much out of my A's except my own self pride, and boy you don't know how much that means! Being homebound doesn't sound very important until you sit in it. It's a life of confinement to a room, confinement to an area, and for me it means frustrations and physical factors keep me there no matter how much I try to escape. It's a reality that I have to face everyday.

There's hope for those who are handicapped or homebound or whatever you want to call it through audio teleconferencing. It gives us a chance to grow and reach for new goals and to communicate with fellow students and instructors. It opens a world of dreams and a chance for self satisfaction, as I've just said, and that's very important.

My disease is an advanced form of a connective tissue disease, and it is marked terminal. Life should have ended 3 years ago according to the doctors, and it's threatened daily. I could give up, but instead I decided I'd reach out and dream a little with Rio Salado.

I'm still here, and my body indeed is impaired. But my mind is a busy one, and it needs stimulation. A description of my handicaps may make you more aware of the challenges that must be worked through in order for this program to succeed.

My movement is greatly impaired and painful, with braces, and my only means of transportation is an electric wheelchair and a handicapped van with a lift, which I use only to go to the doctor. I'm in an electric bed most of the time, so arranging things to manage them for these class hours takes some doing. I've managed to figure out all the ways! My breathing is sometimes bad, and there's no voice. But as I told you before, that is not a problem. I have impaired eye sight, so I'm using the tapes. That seems to be no problem.

It doesn't seem to me that there's any problems too small or too large that the students, instructors and staff can't handle, so we can go over all the new walls that come up. No one is afraid of a change, and change is the only way we're going to advance. I'm sure we're going to see a lot more changes, and I'm sure all of us will take them in stride and do even better. Everybody's been talking about whether education is necessary. Well, it's rewarding to the students. To me and others like me, it's a dream and thrill that we can't even put into words.

You people don't have any idea what this means to us. It's a time that I look forward to that's my own accomplishment. It's my own 2 1/2 hours, and when the question was asked "How can I sit there and listen," he's out there listening all day. We're here! And for us this is something special.

I can't say enough about the program or enough about the people in it. I may never be in your world to use what I'm learning in a way that seems important, but many of the students I'm with will be out there and will serve us all.

There's another area that I think should be brought up about these courses. I've had a stroke and several TIA's or mini strokes. They affected the left side of my body and therefore the right side of my brain. If you know about that, it means spelling, numbers, memory and thought. When I started my first course with David Cost in computers, I almost gave up. But I had a talk with a speech therapist and learned how to apply myself in small ways. At the end of that course, my spelling and my numbers had started coming back. With Appreciation and Literature of Music, I could spell and do most of the numbers fairly well. I am advancing all the time, and it's only because of this kind of use. I think that really says something for these kinds of courses for lots of people. Even though you are physically handicapped, your mind will go handicapped if it's not given a chance to be used.

If no likely miracle comes about, I guess I'll be physically handicapped until I enter heaven, but I sure have been given the best of healing - a clear mind, a dream and the ability to enjoy opportunities like the Homebound Project. I can't wait until school starts in the fall, and I sure hope we have lots more than 29 students. I thank all of you.

Summary for Small Group Discussions

After lunch, the conference was divided into three groups. Each group addressed the following questions:

1. What impact could this program have on your agency/community?

2. What type of courses/programs would you like to see offered through this system?

3. What are the specific/special needs of your clients?

4. What kind of resources are available for the Homebound Project - financial, referral, special needs?

The following is a summary of their comments.

1. What impact could this program have on your agency/community?

Agencies felt that the Homebound Project was a positive force. It would enhance their residents'/clients'/patients' socialization skills, enrich their lives and provide needed mental stimulation, as well as be an important step for many in an overall program designed to mainstream that person into the community.

Care centers/nursing homes with younger clients saw the Homebound Project as a vital opportunity for their people.

Representatives from DES Vocational Rehabilitation Services believed the project could provide an answer for many of their clients who are not stable enough to qualify for VR Services.

Agencies felt the program was very cost effective.

Agencies outside of Maricopa County were concerned about long distance phone charges which their agency and/or client would have to pay.

2. What type of courses/programs would you like to see offered through this system?

Care centers/nursing homes and other agencies which represented senior adults were interested in the non-credit/continuing educational programming as a first step to getting their people into the system.

DES Vocational Rehabilitation Services focused on those credit courses which would be part of an overall program to eventually make their clients "employable". In this instance, Rio Salado is exploring non traditional employment opportunities for homebound people.

Most agencies wanted to talk with us further, on an individual basis, about specific programming. In this regard, many asked if Rio Salado could come out to their facility and demonstrate the system, talk with staff and in essence provide an on site orientation. We would be delighted to do this!

3. What are the specific/special needs of your clients?

Agencies felt Rio Salado was meeting the client's needs in this area. The Homebound Project deals with each student on an individual basis in terms of needs - headsets, test proctoring, adapting course materials, academic advisement, etc.

The question was asked, "What about deaf/hearing impaired people?" Deaf students have taken courses through the audio teleconferencing system using interpreters. We are exploring the use of TTY's and also the use of a special induction coil.

4. What kind of resources are available for the Homebound Project - financial, referral, special needs?

The majority of this discussion centered on funding - both funding for the Homebound Project itself and possible fund raising through agencies for clients to pay for tuition fees, etc.

The Homebound Project was funded through May 1984 as a pilot project. We are looking for funding, in terms of grants and/or private donations (which are tax deductible), to keep on staff a full time director and program advisor, people who are essential to the Homebound Project.

We have applied for grants through DES Vocational Rehabilitation, nationally and locally, to serve those homebound people whose goal is employment.

We need funding sources! If you have any specific information/referrals, please call Helen Sprawls at 256-7722, extension 204.

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